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OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				
EXAMINER				
SONG, MATTHEW J				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1792				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

patentdocket@oblon.com
oblonpat@oblon.com
jgardner@oblon.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/720,122

Applicant(s)

TSUJIMOTO ET AL.

Examiner

MATTHEW J. SONG

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 March 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 14-16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24 and 26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 14-16, 18-19, 21-22, 24 and 26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/2/08.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

2. Claims 14-16, 18-19, 21-22, 24 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hansen et al (US 5,980,629) in view of Watanabe et al (US 6,106,610).

In a method of forming a crucible for production of silicon single crystals, note entire reference, Hansen et al teaches a crucible has inner and outer coatings of a devitrification promoter (col 3, ln 1-50 and col 4, ln 40-55). Hansen et al also teaches granular polycrystalline silicon is loaded into the crucible (col 3, ln 50-67) and the devitrification promoter is preferably barium, magnesium, strontium or beryllium (col 6, ln 20-5). Hansen et al also teaches devitrification promoters includes metal oxides, carbonates, oxalates and ion pairs of a metal

cation and organic anions (col 6, ln 1-65), this clearly suggests applicant's metal salts, metal organic acid salt, and barium carbonate.

Hansen et al does not teach the crystallization promoter is dispersed in a silica matrix. Hansen et al is not particular about the method used to coat the surface of the crucible.

In a method of forming a crucible, note entire reference, Watanabe et al teaches a crystallization promoter can be used either alone or as a mixture with a powder of synthetic silicon dioxide to form a translucent quartz glass layer. Watanabe et al teaches depositing a synthetic silicon dioxide powder sufficiently impregnated with the aqueous solution, and the layer is formed as a coated film or a solid solution layer on the surface (col 3, ln 30-65 and col 4, ln 1-35), this reads on applicant's crystallization promoter dispersed in a silica matrix. Watanabe et al also teaches a crystallization promoter layer is fused to a base body (col 5, ln 5-30). Watanabe et al also teaches a transparent internal quartz layer (col 5, ln 55-67).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Hansen et al by fusing the layer with a crystallization promoter dispersed in a silica matrix to the base body as taught by Watanabe et al to improve adherence and improve safety by reducing the risk of inhalation and ingestion of the promoter ('629 col 8, ln 10-35).

Referring to claim 14, the combination of Hansen et al and Watanabe et al teaches a concentration of 1×10^{-5} to 1×10^{-8} M/cm² ('610 claims 3 and 11). Overlapping ranges are prima facie obvious (MPEP 2144.05).

As to the "consisting essentially of" language of claim 14, for the purposes of searching for and applying prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103, absent a clear indication in the specification or claims of what the basic and novel characteristics actually are, "consisting

essentially of” will be construed as equivalent to “comprising.” (MPEP 2111.03 [R-3]). The claims and specification lack a clear indication of what the basic and novel characteristics are; therefore the claims is construed as equivalent to "comprising." Furthermore, the combination of Hansen et al and Watanabe et al teaches a silicon dioxide powder impregnated with a crystallization promoter and is silent to other elements, thus meets the claimed language (‘610 col 3, ln 30-40).

As to the mechanical strength limitation and the coated layer not being scratched and not changing upon acid washing, the combination of Hansen et al and Watanabe et al teaches a similar method of forming a coated layer by dispersing a crystallization promoter within a silica matrix, as applicant; therefore the properties are expected to be the same because a similar method is expected to produce a product with similar properties. Furthermore, the combination of Hansen et al and Watanabe et al teaches the promoter is fused to the base body (‘610 col 5, ln 5-30), which clearly suggests that the promoter is strongly adhered to the base body.

As to a crystallization promoter uniformly dispersed, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the combination of Hansen et al and Watanabe et al by dispersing the promoter uniformly because having uniform properties would have been desirable.

Referring to claim 15, the combination of Hansen et al and Watanabe et al does not disclose the claimed method of obtaining the crucible using a partial hydrolyzate of alkoxysilane oligomer, which is a product-by-process claim and the patentability determination of a product-by-process claim is based on the patentability of the product and does not depend on its method of production (MPEP 2113). The combination of Hansen et al and Watanabe et al teaches a

crucible, which meets all of the claimed product limitations of claim 15. The same arguments apply for claims 16 and 18-20, which specify the liquid used to obtain the crystallization promoter layer.

Referring to claims 21-24 and 26, the combination of Hansen et al and Watanabe et al teaches a crystallization promoter layer **24, 26** on the inside and outside surfaces of the crucible and polysilicon in the crucible. ('629 Fig 1 and col 12, ln 25-35).

Response to Amendment

3. The declaration under 37 CFR 1.132 filed 3/17/2008 is insufficient to overcome the rejection of claims 14-16, 18-19, 21-22, 24 and 26 based upon 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Hansen et al (US 5,980,629) in view of Watanabe et al (US 6,106,610) as set forth in the last Office action because: the declaration does not compare the closest prior art. Watanabe et al teaches a similar method of forming a promoter layer by dispersing a promoter in a silicon oxide powder. The declaration fails to show an unexpected result compared to Watanabe. The declaration is also outside the scope of the claimed invention because the declaration alleges unexpected results for thicknesses of the layers, however the claims do not recite any thickness limitation.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 14-16, 18-19, 21-22, 24 and 26 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

5. Applicant's arguments filed 3/17/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's argument that Watanabe and Hansen cannot be combined is noted but not found persuasive. Hansen teaches a crucible surface can be coated by any method that deposits a devitrification promoter to the surface (col 7, ln 35-45); therefore Hansen is not limited to any particular method of forming a promoter layer. Watanabe et al teaches a method of forming a promoter layer by dispersing a promoter in a silicon oxide powder such that the promoter can be fused to the base body (col 3, ln 25-40; col 4, ln 15-30 and col 5, ln 5-30). Watanabe et al is not relied upon as a teaching to improve the inner surface of a crucible. Watanabe et al is merely relied upon to teach an known method of forming a promoter layer. Watanabe et al's method of forming the promoter layer does not require forming the additional silicon layer.

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

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however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MATTHEW J. SONG whose telephone number is (571)272-1468. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Kornakov can be reached on 571-272-1303. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Matthew J Song
Examiner
Art Unit 1792

MJS
July 2, 2008
/Michael Kornakov/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1792